

Record Day for Par for a Cause

In the spirit of Paris' Summer Olympic Games – Unity, Friendship & Celebration – the 2024 Par for a Cause came through with a gold medal performance on Thursday, August 1.

One hundred thirty-two women members suited up in Olympic colours for the 21st annual PFAC charity fundraiser. They enjoyed a wonderful morning of golf with friends and shared a unified goal of making a meaningful difference in the lives of thousands of school children through the simplest gesture.

When all is said and done, a record-setting donation of \$80,000 from Par for a Cause will be presented to The Bulldogs Foundation Breakfast Program, allowing students to start their day with a healthy nutritional meal.

"It feels absolutely amazing to reach the \$80,000 mark. It was wonderful to send a note to the folks at the Bulldogs Foundation to share the great news with them. They were beyond thrilled and truly grateful for the generosity of our HGCC members," says Melanie, who first connected with the Bulldogs Foundation when her family billeted one of the hockey team's Russian imports from 2020 to 2022. "After learning more about the incredible work of the Bulldogs Foundation, the Nutrition Program and its' impact on local children, I felt that it would be a cause that would resonate with all HGCC members, allowing everyone to feel encouraged about contributing to this worthy charity."

"Teamwork and commitment are everything. The PFAC Committee has been working since January 2024 planning this event in conjunction with the food & beverage team, our golf professionals, finance, and management staff - the dedication that everyone brought to making this a successful day was incredible. Additionally, the continued generosity of our sponsors year after year to champion the cause has been so deeply appreciated, and we are incredibly grateful for their ongoing support," Melanie adds. "We hope our donation makes a positive impact on the lives of the children it serves, encouraging them to attend school and giving them a strong, positive start to their day."

Through the Bulldogs Foundation, the Breakfast Program is providing 10,000 meals to children at 20 high-needs elementary and secondary schools in



Julie Thompson, Cathy Drury, Robin Graham and Rhonda Scott - co-winners Best Costumes/Golf Carts.



Maria D'Ambrosi, Jackie Smith, Gale Zizzo and Laura Jennings - co-winners Best Costumes/Golf Carts.



Nicola Jamani, Carm Sakas, Sheila Drury and Janice Inch posted the low team score for the day.

Hamilton in 2024 and will continue to expand in 2025 as a result of this funding.

The Breakfast Program also provides food to the Eva Rothwell Centre for children in downtown Hamilton and the Brant Food for Thought school nutritional program.

"This is a huge boost for the Breakfast Program. This donation is really important to us. We continue to feed more and more children, and their needs are rising daily," says Peggy Chapman, Executive Director for the Bulldogs Foundation.

Food costs for the program have risen 30 percent since 2021, and Peggy continues to see increasing prices. In 2024, she expects the program will spend \$200,000 on food through a partnership with Sobeys.

"It's heartbreaking to see children coming to school with no food in their stomachs. How can they be expected to learn, to play, to have fun when they don't know where their next meal is coming from," Chapman shares.

The Bulldogs Foundation also provides an annual \$5,000 Harry Howell Scholarship to two students, including Gelila Tefera, who graduated from Cathedral High School in June and will enter the Nursing Program at Conestoga College in the fall. She volunteered each morning at the breakfast program over the past three years after arriving in Canada from Ethiopia in 2022. She will be the first person in her family to ever attend post-secondary school education.

"I would like to thank each of you for supporting the Bulldogs Foundation and the breakfast program. It really makes a huge positive impact for so many students, who would otherwise go hungry," said Gelila, who spoke to members at the PFAC lunch.

Carm Sakas, Nicola Jamani, Sheila Drury, & Janice Inch posted the low score of 64.

There was a split decision among the judges for top honours for Best Costumes/Golf Carts, with two teams sharing the gold. Cathy Drury, Julie Thompson, Rhonda Scott and Robin Graham created one of the winning themes. At the same time, Laura Jennings, Gale Zizzo, Jackie Smith and Maria D'Ambrosi came through with the other winner.

Cathy Drury bought the team Olympic Games hats while visiting Paris earlier in summer. Everyone donned an 'Olympic' medal while sporting the five Olympic



PFAC organizing committee members Melanie Oster, Holly Robertson, Judy Forbes and Karen Llewellyn with Bruiser, the Bulldogs' mascot.



Christine Heagle, Ruth Sibma, Pam Cyr and Krystyna Aranha.



Tina Bellavia, Laurie Summers, Cathie McCarthy and Jing Guo.

colours, including the green golf cart. Cathy found them hoop ring earrings and flashy glasses with a Canadian flag as the lens.

"It really started with the trip to Paris that pumped me up and then I just started collecting other cool things to decorate the cart to show our Olympic spirit," Cathy says. "It's a wonderful day for the Women's Section, and sharing that giving spirit as we help children in our community makes it extra special. So thankful for all the work Melanie and her committee put into making this year's event so much fun and so meaningful."

Jackie, Laura, Gale, and Maria played in the tournament for the first time as a foursome. They matched their golfing attire to the French flag, wearing white skirts, blue tops, and red Canada hats to support Team Canada. They sported matching gold medals and decorated the cart with more medals, Olympic rings, and flags from around the world.

"Wow \$80,000. What an incredible accomplishment. So proud to have been part of this great event," says Jackie, who is in her first year doing Intro to Golf. "It is hard to pick one moment from this day as a lasting memory. I truly loved the entire day. The organizing committee did such a wonderful job putting this event together. I hope to play with the same girls again next year. We had so much fun!

In the Ashley Jewellers 'Hit the Green' contest, Sheila Drury won the earrings and Gale Zizzo won the necklace. Kim Dimen won the 'Guess the No. of Tees' contest at 327, with the actual number being 329 and took home a beautiful custom made charcuterie board donated by Tim Woods.

Closest to the Line gift cards courtesy of The Keg went to Jayne Chalmers on 2 West, to Meredith Hedley on 6 East and to Robin Graham on 5 South. Marg Scime won the draw from the Drive for Gold past the Olympic rings contest, receiving a \$1,000 gift certificate generously sponsored by Flow by Nicole.

Heather Webster took the top spot in the always popular Denninger's Putting Challenge with an excellent score of 60 points, followed by Marilyn Gregus at 50 points. Heather hit the wall on her first putt, and it looked like she was out of the hunt. Aiming at the 20-point centre opening, her second ball tracked right to the hole. Then she aimed the lucky 'double-your points' gold ball at the centre opening, bringing the total to 60 points.



Deb Lancaster, Christine Muschalla and Francine Pilon with Bruiser, the Bulldogs' mascot.



Erin Fava, Laurie Gatto, Louisa Spallacci and Le'Ann Seely.



Diane Peller, Tracey Anderson, Deb Scime and Arlene Bennink.



Libby Hammond and Julie Dilworth.



Rachelle Solski at registration.



Jennifer Matthie, Jennifer Jewitt-Matsumoto, Romina Zizzo and Jody McComb-MacDonald drinking it all in.



Mary A-Z watching Carolyn Milne putting with Alison Montgomery, Fiona McBride, & Erica Smith.



Marianne Simpson writing in a bid for a silent auction item.



Marilyn Gregus, Jennifer Everson and Kim Dimen chatting up Rip Wheeler.



PFAC committee members with a van full of gently used clothing donated to Interval House of Hamilton.



Dawn Pray, Pauline Maue, Jane Pietrantonio and Betsy Ippolito.



Nancy Nancekivell entering the Flow by Nicole White & Warren scarf draw.



Melanie Oster with the registration team including Pennie Simkins, Bruiser, Josh Lynch and Justin Kudrasovs.



Eileen Bidulka, Lori Epifani, Helen Cutaia and Karen Llewellyn.



Student Gelila Tefera (centre) with Student Success Teacher Lori Varrasso and Melanie Oster.



Marg Szarka, Ursula Blair, Sharon McChesney and Ann Adams.



Denise Johnston, Heather Webster, Meg Pigott and Melanie Sabo.



A special thank you to this year's three Platinum sponsors - a new level of support for 2024!